

# Science lab safety tips

The chemicals, products and equipment used in secondary school science programs have certain potential dangers. With careful planning and practical steps implemented, most dangers can be avoided. Use this resource to help your school improve the health and safety practices in your lab.

- 1 Have a designated chemical hygiene officer who is responsible for chemical safety, inventory, ordering, clean-up and hazard response (e.g., science department chairperson or science teacher).
- 2 Have staff and student access to first aid and chemical spill kits.
- 3 Maintain a chemical inventory list including quantity and date received.
- 4 Know and verify you do not have any of the ban candidate chemicals and prioritize proper disposal of any chemicals in your lab.
- 5 Have access to safety data sheets for all chemicals in the lab. This can be hard copies or an electronic management system.
- 6 Purchase chemicals in the smallest quantity that will meet the needs of the school for five years.
- 7 Follow the top storage tips:
  - a. Store by property, not alphabetic.
  - b. Use plastic containment trays with lips to prevent accidental mixing and spills.
  - c. Keep chemicals below eye level (about 5'6").
- 8 Separate chemicals by properties.
  - a. Do not store alphabetically.
  - b. Flammables away from combustibles.
  - c. Water reactive compounds away from organic peroxides.
  - d. Provide flammable and acids cabinets.
  - e. Post quick reference compatibility charts.
- 9 Keep food for human consumption out of the lab.
- 10 Follow proper labeling practices. Labels should include:
  - a. Hazard symbols.
  - b. Secondary labels clearly displaying chemical contents, warnings and physical hazards.
- 11 Know your personal protective equipment:
  - a. Emergency eyewash.
  - b. Emergency shower.
  - c. Gloves rated for the right chemical agent.



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